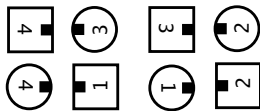


# Square Dancers As Beads-On-A-String

Calvin Campbell

The concept of dancers being beads on a string is a powerful tool for any caller that uses modules. I first read about the concept in the book "Symmetric Choreography and Sight Calling" published in 1972 by a caller named Bill Davis. I didn't understand much else that he explained in that book, but the Beads-On-A-String Concept has been very useful for me.

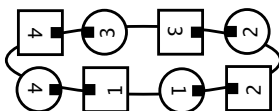
Here is the diagram of a Corner Box FASR formed when the **Heads Square Thru 4**.



In this FASR, both the men and ladies are in sequence. The relationship is partner. In Modern Western Square Dancing, this is called an 8-Chain-Thru Formation. It's a 2X4 rectangular grid.

The set is referred to as "resolved" because the dancers can **Allemande Left** and the next dancer would be their original partner.

If you visualize it another way, imagine that the dancers are beads strung on a string. The ends of the string have been connected and pulled into an oval loop shape.

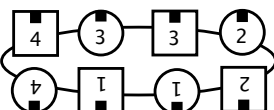


No matter how you shift the whole string of dancers CW or CCW, everyone will stay in the same Sequence and Relationship unless some call is given to change the order or sequence.

OK! Now let's take Corner Box and Convert it to Lines of Four Facing Out (LnFcO) without changing the Sequence or Relationship. I.e. Keep the set resolved.

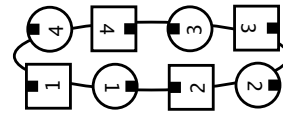
ZB-LnFcO

**Star Thru ... Square Thru 3/4...**



This module changes the FASR to Lines of Four Facing Out. If you compare the two diagrams, nothing has changed except the facing direction of the dancers. All the dancer beads are still in the same order. The set is still resolved. The dancers can do a **Left Allemande**.

Next, start with a Corner Box again and move the string one position clockwise. but don't change the direction each dancer faces. The destination FASR looks like the one below.



ZB-TdBy

**2 Ladies Chain ... Pass Thru ... Center 2 Ladies Chain ...**

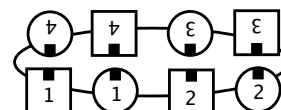
In doing this, the whole string is visually shifted clockwise one position. Each dancer stays facing the same direction. The module creates another Formation that has been named the Trade By Formation. The set is still resolved.

If you notice, the number of "basics" needed for the getout FASRs are only 2 and 3 basics. There are numerous Equivalents for **Star Thru**, **Pass Thru** and **2 Ladies Chain**. With little memory work, the average caller should be able to compose a dozen Corner Box Getouts using three different FAs.

Another formation that we all should be using is Partner Lines/Zero Lines. From the above Trade By FASR call the following.

Tdby-ZL

**Face the one beside you & back away.**

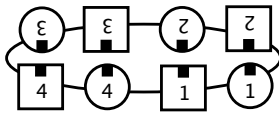


Compare the two diagrams above and the only thing that has visually changed is the facing direction of each dancer. The set is still resolved. An **Allemande Left** is possible. In this case, the man could also **Swing Partner** and **Promenade** to get back to a Static Set.

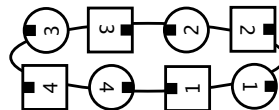
Notice that, in addition to both the men and the women being in sequence, that each partner pair are adjacent to each other on the loop.

These four Getout FASRs have been used for many years. The general concept was originated by Jay King and, I think, published in one of the many books he wrote. If anybody knows the name of the book, please tell me.

Partner Lines are a little easier to demonstrate the beads on a string concept. If the **Heads Lead Right ... Circle Four Left 3/4** the diagram looks like the one below.

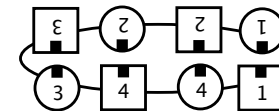


To convert this FASR to a resolved Trade By Formation use the same module as used for the 8-chain-Thru Formation module **Star Thru ... Square Thru 3/4**.



All that has visually changed in this view, is the facing direction of each dancer.

Next, look at the diagram below.



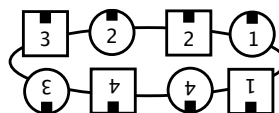
The facing lines have become Half Sashayed Corner Lines. However, notice that the visual effect is a shifting of the beads on the loop counter clockwise. The sequence of the dancers is in-sequence for both the men and the ladies.

Here is a conversion module to accomplish this.

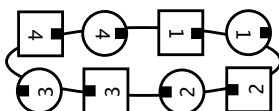
ZL-1/2ShCLn

## 2 Ladies Chain ... Roll Away ... Center Ladies Chain ...

From the above module you can do a **Left Allemande**. To convert the module to LnFcO just have all the dancers **U-Turn Back** or **Turn Thru** or **Box the Gnat ... Pass Thru ...** The FASR diagram is below.



Another interesting Formation and Arrangement we usually do from a Partner Line is to form Parallel Columns by doing a **Touch 1/4**. This puts both the men and ladies out of sequence. The FASR diagram is below.

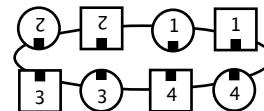


To me, this FASR is just another version of a loop with the dancers all facing around the loop clockwise. At some point the module will have to put both the men and the

ladies back in sequence to resolve the set. The usual strategy is to have the dancers **Column Circulate once ... Men Run around the Ladies**. This converts the Parallel Columns to a Corner Box.

You can also have the dancers **Face the one beside you ... Box the Gnat ...** and the set is back to the Partner Lines.

If you have the dancers **Column Circulate Twice ... Face the 1 beside You ... Right and Left Thru ...** the square is back in sequence and resolved. See the diagram below.



So, how do I use this information in calling? I'm a very visually oriented caller. I have an image in my mind of how each of these FASR diagrams look. I watch the dancers on the floor to see of the images, in my mind, agree with what I see in the sets on the dance floor.

When I use short modules, I substitute equivalents for some of the "basics" I've used. I may add in other zero modules at certain points. The mental images of what the sets should look like tells me if the dancers are successful. If enough sets are crashing, I can very quickly resolve the set, and go back to a Static Square and try again.

This is not sight calling. Everything is done with memorized modules aided by mental images of what the sets should look like. I sometimes even follow the #1 couple and see if they are in the correct position at the end of the module.

From the dancer viewpoint, dancers are very aware of changes in Formation and, sometimes, the Arrangement. They are very good at recognizing flowing dance patterns. They like to dance these patterns and sequences from different directions (rotations). That is most of the pleasure about square dancing.

Most dancers only relax when they have their original partner back on the correct side. They get an ego boost when that happens. So, I make it happen often.

Dancers recognize that they have succeeded doing a dance routine when they hear **Left Allemande** or **Swing** or **You're Home** or **Promenade**. I make that happen frequently.

I'm not trying to fool them or keep them on their toes. I'm trying to keep them dancing smoothly. Having tools like visualizing Beads-on-a-String help me do that.